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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

Juan Vargas
51st District, California

COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTOR PROTECTION,
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COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
WESTERN HEMISPHERE, CIVILIAN SECURITY,
AND TRADE

MIDDLE EAST, NORTH AFRICA,
AND INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

March 24, 2020

Michael R. Pompeo
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

Andrew R. Wheeler
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Room 3426 WJC North
Washington, DC 20460

Jayne Harkins
Commissioner
International Boundary and Water
Commission, U.S. Section
4191 North Mesa St.
El Paso, TX 79902

Dear Secretary Pompeo, Administrator Wheeler, and Commissioner Harkins

I am writing to address and request information on the worsening situation in the Tijuana River Valley, located along the California-Mexico border in the 51st Congressional District. I have been told that at the end of 2019 there were heavy rainstorms that left several pumps in Tijuana, Mexico inoperable. In a recent letter, the Port of San Diego and the City of Imperial Beach informed my office about these inoperable pumps. Therefore, I am asking for a status update on the current situation in the Tijuana River Valley. I am also requesting that the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and

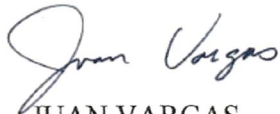
this situation far more dire than the sewage spills in February 2017 when 256 million gallons of wastewater flowed into the United States and then the Pacific Ocean.

This severe situation negatively affects the lives and livelihood of people living in and around the Tijuana River Valley. At the same time, the Port of San Diego and City of Imperial Beach reported to my office that DOS, the EPA, IBWC, and Mexico are not providing sufficient information to the public about when these inoperable pumps will be repaired or replaced. Therefore, I write today on behalf of stakeholders in my district, to request an update on the following topics:

1. The status of communication between DOS and Mexican officials on this issue.
2. The status of repairing the pump stations.
3. The volume of sewage released to the Tijuana River since the loss of any pump stations.
4. The flow source identification and contribution (i.e. wastewater, stormwater, etc., and at what ratio).

The inoperable pumps have resulted in an overwhelming amount of toxic sewage in the region. This is a dire situation and I would appreciate your attention to my request for an update on the status of the pumps affecting the Tijuana River Valley and my request for a response to the concerns of the Port of San Diego and the City of Imperial Beach. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Paola Guzman, of my staff, at (202) 225-8045 or by email at paola.guzman@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Juan Vargas", with a stylized, cursive script.

JUAN VARGAS
Member of Congress